inside
VERSORGUNGS FORSCHUNG

made in Senftenberg



Serie (Teil 39): Department of Health Sciences at Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg, Lusatian Centre for Digital Public Health

‚Structural change is being researched in Lusatia'

The Department of Health Sciences was established in 2015 at the Senftenberg site of the Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg with the aim of establishing health sciences in research and teaching. In terms of teaching, the first few years were characterised by the establishment of health-related degree programmes in nursing, therapy and midwifery science as well as vocational education for health professions together with colleagues from the Institute of Health. This year, the new Lusatian Centre for Digital Public Health was launched with funding from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), bringing together the previous research focuses of the department and linking them specifically with the aspect of digitally driven further development of healthcare in Lusatia. University professor Prof. Dr Jacob Spallek heads the Department of Health Sciences at Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg and the new Lusatian Centre for Digital Public Health.

>> More than 400 students are currently studying a health degree programme in Senftenberg. In the field of research, various larger, supra-regional projects and collaborative projects in the areas of social epidemiology and health services research have been carried out, both in the basic and applied areas. Examples include the BaBi and BaBeK studies (1, 2) in cooperation with the University of Bielefeld and Charité Berlin or the DFG Research Group 2723 in cooperation with several leading health centres in Germany. In healthcare research, projects were carried out as part of the Brandenburg Health Campus and in cooperation with Dresden University Hospital, funded by German Cancer Aid (‚Living with Cancer'), whichfocussed specifically on the healthcare situationof the population.



Prof. Dr. Jacob Spallek MSc
has been University Professor of Health Sciences at the Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg since December 2015. He heads the Department of Health Sciences and the Lusatian Centre for Digital Public Health.

Career/stations 2011 - 2015: Junior Professor (W1) for Social Epidemiology. Faculty of Health Sciences. University of Bielefeld. 2010 - 2011: Head of the Department of Social Epidemiology, Bremen Institute for Prevention Research and Social Medicine (BIPS). 2010: Doctor of Public Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, Bielefeld University. 2003 - 2005: Study of Epidemiology (Master of Science in Epidemiology), University of Bielefeld. 1999 - 2003: Degree in Health Sciences (Diploma), University of Applied Sciences, Hamburg.

The new Lusatian Centre for Digital Public Health in Senftenberg, LauZeDiPH for short, is run in cooperation with the Centre for Artificial Intelligence in Public Health Research at the Robert Koch Institute in Wildau and the Leibniz ScienceCampus Digital Public Health in Bremen. Its task is to conduct accompanying public health and healthcare research for the ongoing changes in basic health conditions and healthcare provision in Lusatia. In doing so, it explicitly includes the perspective of the population and practitioners and aims to use its results to support the goals described above of the best possible and fair health and healthcare for the population. On the basis of the data collected by LauZeDiPH, public health interventions are then to be developed that meet the needs of the population in Lusatia. In addition, population health is to be continuously monitored and evaluated using comprehensively collected data.

The department and the new Lusatian Centre for Digital Public Health will combine traditional approaches and objectives of public health, health services research and social epidemiology with the aspect of digital and analogue changes in conditions, particularly in health care. Determinants of health inequality, which can also change in this dynamic - keyword digital divide - and the reduction of health inequality are the focus of the work. Health is not only characterised by healthcare, but by a variety of factors - from living conditions to individual characteristics - over the entire life course.

At the centre of all this is the realisation that the best possible health of the population can only be achieved by taking a multi-perspective view, which, in addition to the diagnosis and treatment of illnesses, also focuses in particular on the reasons for the development of illness and health, the possibilities of prevention and health promotion and people's living conditions.

Prof Dr Jacob Spallek studied health sciences and epidemiology in Hamburg and Bielefeld and completed his doctorate in public health with a focus on health inequality. In his opinion, healthcare is an important factor in both the development and reduction of health inequality. Spallek: ‚As a result, healthcare research has always been an important part of my research and teaching, especially in Lusatia, which is currently undergoing major structural changes.'

For his personal work as a scientist in Lusatia, this means using research to achieve these goals, reducing health inequalities, identifying risks and barriers, but also opportunities for the best possible health and healthcare and making innovations, such as digitalisation, accessible to everyone. This also includes the central concern of healthcare research that access to healthcare should not be dependent on personal or contextual characteristics.

Back in 2015, he accepted a call from the Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg to establish health sciences at the newly founded Institute of Health in Senftenberg. In addition to establishing health-related degree programmes at the site, this includes health science research in both basic and applied areas. He was particularly attracted by the fact that Lusatia is characterised by great dynamism due to the strong structural and demographic change, including in the design and further development of healthcare. In his opinion, this can also be seen in health research, for example through structural change projects - such as the Lusatian Centre for Digital Public Health launched this year - or on a larger scale through the establishment of an innovation centre University Medicine Cottbus, including the founding of a new medical degree programme and a university clinic. , Things are currently happening in Lusatia that anticipate developments in many regions of Europe,' explains Spallek. ‚Lusatia is a highly interesting region for researching the health effects of structural change and ways of shaping them from a healthcare and public health perspective.'

Spallek's greatest successes to date are the implementation of the large collaborative studies (BaBi/BaBeK, DFG Research Group 2723) and the new insights into the development of health inequality gained in these studies, as well as the establishment of the Lusatian Centre for Digital Public Health with funding until 2032. <<



Stephanie Hoffmann,
research associate

>> Why do you work in the Department of Health Sciences at the Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg and the LauZeDiPH?

After studying health management and later health sciences, I spent some time working in the regional healthcare industry in Lusatia. I started working as a research assistant in the Department of Health Sciences in Senftenberg in April 2017 in order to gain a better understanding of how health is created locally in Lusatia, what protective or problematic factors can be and what measures can be useful for promoting health from a public health perspective.

What do you think distinguishes the Department of Health Sciences at Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg and the new Lusatian Centre for Digital Public Health?

At the Department of Health Sciences, I particularly appreciate the individual opportunities to gain experience in university teaching in various health-related degree programmes as well as in health science research, as I consider both to be essential components of scientific training. The many scientific collaborations and research networks, such as the DFG Research Unit 2723 (3) or the new Lusatian Centre for Digital Public Health (4), are particularly valuable.

What topics and issues are you currently working on?

My research focuses on unequal opportunities for children to grow up healthy in early childhood up to the age of 8. This phase of life is so important because, on the one hand,

the foundations for health in later life are laid here. On the other hand, children are particularly susceptible to influences from their family and regional living environment. To ensure equal health opportunities, we need to strengthen health-related resources and minimise risks. We need scientific findings on this.

What would you personally like to achieve with health services research?

I would like to contribute to a better understanding of the unequal health opportunities of the population in Lusatia and identify starting points for a needs-based healthcare system that also enables equal access to prevention and care for all population groupsht. <<



Martin Stabler,
research assistant

>> Why do you work in the Department of Health Sciences at the Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg and the new Lusatian Centre for Digital Public Health?

After studying geography at the FU Berlin, I came across the field of health geography as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. This involves looking at health-related issues from a spatial perspective. Such an interdisciplinary view can always be an enrichment for the health sciences. I was initially able to deepen my expertise in the field of health geography/health research in a DFG project on the spatial diffusion of Covid-19 in Germany at the Leibniz Institute for Spatial Social Research. Since July 2023, I have been working at the new Lusatian Centre for Digital Public Health in Senftenberg. I see my work here as an ideal opportunity to further expand and apply my research expertise at the interface between health geography and health sciences.

In your opinion, what distinguishes the Department of Health Sciences at Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg and the new Lusatian Centre for Digital Public Health?

In my opinion, the LauZeDiPH is characterised by its regional focus on Lusatia, which has been little researched to date, and by its large interdisciplinary team. In addition to its clear focus on population health and health inequality, the project is designed with the necessary openness to new findings and innovations in healthcare, which is very important for successful research.

What topics and issues are you currently working on?

From a geographical perspective, I am primarily concerned with the interface between space and health. For the LauZeDiPH project, I am entrusted with data management and data analyses. This raises the question of whether there are particularly exposed areas in Lusatia that influence population health. The collection, collation and linking of health and geodata is a complex challenge.

What would you personally like to achieve with healthcare research?

My goal is to use evidence-based research and analyses to contribute to a better understanding of the health of people in Lusatia in their specific constellation and to be able to explain health inequalities. <<

Literature

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3: https://gepris.dfg.de/gepris/projekt/384210238?context=projekt&task=showDetail&id=384210238&

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